

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An air decontamination system for mail processing, comprising
 - a sealed mail processing area having an air inlet;
 - a vacuum unit ~~which creates~~to create a negative pressure within said sealed mail processing area, by suctioning air through the air inlet into said sealed mail processing area and then from said sealed mail processing area into an inlet of said vacuum unit;
 - a work surface disposed in said sealed mail processing area ~~wherein an object of mail may be introduced onto said work surface~~, said work surface being positioned at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area, said air ~~[[being]]~~to be suctioned downwardly through said work surface; and
 - a filter unit ~~which filters~~to filter said air as said air is drawn out of the sealed mail processing area.
2. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed ~~[[room]]~~ mail processing area has a modular construction.
3. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed ~~[[room]]~~ mail processing area includes removable walls.

4. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 3, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes at least one of a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

5. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 3, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

6. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area has at least one transparent wall.

7. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:

an air lock room connected to said sealed [[room]] mail processing area, wherein said air inlet extends between said sealed [[room]] mail processing area and said air lock room, and wherein the air suctioned through said air inlet resides within said air lock room.

8. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 7, further comprising:

another air inlet which allows air to pass from an outside source

into said air lock room, wherein the negative pressure created by said vacuum unit draws air from said outside source into said sealed [[room]] mail processing area through said another air inlet and said air inlet.

9. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 8, further comprising:

another filter unit connected to said another air inlet, said another filter unit filtering air from said outside source.

10. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:

an intercom system which allows a person outside said [[room]] sealed mail processing area to communicate with a person inside said [[room]] sealed mail processing area.

11. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:

a warning device which provides an indication that said sealed [[room]] mail processing area is in use.

12. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim [[1,]] 1, wherein said vacuum unit creates a laminar flow of air within said ~~sorting room~~ sealed mail processing area.

13 . (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim [[1,]] 1, wherein said filter unit includes:

a first filter which filters particles within a first range of sizes; and a
second filter which filters particles within a second range of
sizes,

wherein said second range of sizes is smaller than said first range of sizes.

14. (currently amended) The air decontamination system of claim [[13 ,]] 13,
wherein said filter unit includes a third filter which removes chemical contaminates.

15. (currently amended) A method for removing contaminants from air in a
sealed mail processing area, comprising:

providing a work surface at a predetermined height above a floor of said
sealed mail processing area;

introducing an item of mail onto said work surface in the sealed mail
processing area;

creating a downward flow of air within said sealed mail processing area,
said downward flow of air transporting contaminants from said item of mail into an
inlet of a vacuum unit which created said downward flow of air;

said downward flow of air traveling through said work surface disposed in
said sealed mail processing area; and

filtering the air after said vacuum unit has caused the downward flow of
air to pass through said work surface to remove said contaminants.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

assembling the sealed mail ~~sorting room~~ processing area.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said ~~mail sorting room is a sealed room contains~~ sealed mail processing area includes an air inlet and an air outlet.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said filtered air exits the air outlet of said sealed mail ~~sorting room~~ processing area.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area has a modular construction.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 16, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes removable walls.

21. (currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes at least one of a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

22. (currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area has at least one transparent wall.

24. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein:
said work surface is a surface of a mail sorting table, the method further including positioning the inlet of said vacuum unit underneath [[a]] said mail sorting table in said [[room]] sealed mail processing area.

25. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes an intercom system which allows a person outside said [[room]] sealed mail processing area to communicate with a person inside said [[room]] sealed mail processing area.

26. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed [[room]] mail processing area includes a warning device which provides an indication that said sealed [[room]] mail processing area is in use.

27. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said downward flow of air is a laminar air flow.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said filtering step includes:

filtering particles within a first range of sizes from the air suctioned from ~~the edges of~~ said [[table]] work surface; and

filtering particles within a second range of sizes from said filtered air,
wherein said second range of sizes is smaller than said first range of sizes.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein said filtering step includes filtering chemical contaminants from the air suctioned from ~~the edges of~~ said [[table]] work surface.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
attaching an air lock room to said sealed mail sorting room processing area,
area,

wherein said air inlet extends between said sealed [[room]] mail processing area and said air lock room, and wherein the air suctioned through said air inlet resides within said air lock room.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 30, further comprising:
attaching another air inlet to said air lock room, wherein negative pressure created by said vacuum unit in said sealed mail ~~sorting room~~ processing area draws air [[from]] into said sealed [[room]] mail processing area through said another air inlet and said air inlet.

32. (original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
another filter unit connected to said another air inlet, said another filter unit filtering air from an outside source.

33. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising:
providing a mail cleaning device in the sealed mail ~~sorting room~~ processing area, said mail cleaning device including a chamber having an air inlet and an air outlet, said air outlet connected to a vacuum unit and a filter, said vacuum unit suctioning air through said air inlet to create an air flow through said chamber; and
inserting the item of mail into the mail cleaning device.

34. (canceled)

35. (canceled)

36. (canceled)

37. (canceled)